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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q NORTH KOREA/IRAN - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: All Wednesday morning papers gave top play to an announcement Tuesday by the Chinese Foreign Ministry that the US, China, and the DPRK have agreed to resume the six-party talks shortly.

11. "Sanctions Pushed North Korea to Return to the Six-Party Talks" An editorial in the business-oriented Nihon Keizai commented (11/1): "We believe Resolution 1718, adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council (UNSC), was instrumental in getting the DPRK to decide to return to the six-party talks. Although the resolution calls for North Korea's unconditional return to the multilateral forum, that is not its only purpose; the ultimate aim is to seek Pyongyang's complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear and missile programs. The international community must not be taken in by North Korea's attempt to play its favorite 'card' and ease sanctions."

12. "Don't Allow North Korean Nuclear Arms to Become Fait Accompli" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (11/1): "Are the sanctions imposed by the international community showing some results? The Chinese Foreign Ministry announced that the DPRK would return to the six-party talks. Representatives from the US, China, and North Korea reportedly agreed during informal talks in Beijing to an early resumption of the multilateral forum. Assistant Secretary of State Hill, who heads the US delegation, suggested that the talks would resume in November or December. Until recently, North Korea had called on the US to lift its financial sanctions as a precondition for returning to the talks.... Although A/S Hill said North Korea agreed to return to the talks unconditionally, it is still unclear whether Pyongyang will unconditionally discuss the abandonment of its

nuclear program in the event the talks resume."

13. "Iraq Quagmire: Don't Sink Maliki" The liberal Asahi editorialized (11/1): "More than 100 US troops lost their lives in Iraq in October alone, the worst monthly total since the national election there in January 2005. Security continues to worsen. What is more tragic is the number of Iraqi fatalities, with nearly 1,000 dead in just the first half of October.... The primary cause of the deteriorating security situation is the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites, as well as intra-sectarian conflicts.... In order to stabilize the situation, cooperation from neighboring countries will be essential, including Iran and Syria. Even though (Iran's) nuclear development and state sponsorship of terrorism are issues, the US position of refusing to talk with Tehran and Damascus reduces the possibility of reaching a breakthrough in Iraq. The new Iraq must not be allowed to sink. The Maliki government must work harder, while the US needs to be more flexible in its diplomacy."

SCHIEFFER